

**WALTON CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
SHARED DECISION MAKING MEETING
FEBRUARY 15, 2017**

CALL TO ORDER. The meeting was opened by Superintendent Roger B. Clough II at 4:30 p.m.

Attendance: Sign in sheet attached.

UPDATE. Mr. Clough first updated the members on several topics.

1. The district is almost out of snow days, and that the district would therefore hold school next Thursday and Friday, February 23rd and 24th, in order to create two additional snow days. Friday the 24th would be a half day.
2. The budget process was moving forward.
3. Parent Teacher conferences in both buildings have occurred since the last meeting, and there would be another set at Townsend on February 16th, and at the High School and Middle School on March 2nd.
4. Mr. Clough talked about the proposed Broome Community College program, wherein students would take classes at Broome Community College. He stated that about 30 students have indicated an interest, he thinks about 10 might actually go if the program is approved.
5. The district is putting information screens up in gathering areas throughout the school.

QUESTIONS. Mr. Clough then asked for questions.

1. Mr. Hall asked what electives were available, and which ones would be available for next year. Mr. Knuschke listed several electives, and said that a new list would be coming out shortly. Mr. Knuschke agreed to e-mail the new list to the SDM members.
2. Mr. Hall asked about whether there was a possibility of having a digital calendar that could be downloaded and merged with community member's calendars. Mr. Clough said that the district would look into this and have the IT Director, Mr. Robinson, contact Mr. Hall.

TEST REFUSALS. Mr. Clough then turned to Dr. Reed, who gave a presentation on Test Refusals.

1. There is to be an evening community meeting on March 1st on why test participation is important.
2. The powerpoint for that evening was previewed. The powerpoint focused on the intent of the tests, what the results are used for, how the tests are scored, and changes to the test to make them more student-friendly.
3. After the powerpoint presentation, attendees on March 1st will be able to ask questions of the principals and central office personnel.
4. The event will be advertised through the district website, letters, and school messenger. It was suggested that the local newspaper also be contacted to see if a story could be written, and it was agreed that this would be done.

GRADUATION RATE. Mr. Knuschke then spoke about the graduation rate. The district had 100 % of its students who started their senior year graduate from Walton last year. The newspaper reported that the cohort graduation rate was 85 %. The difference is that the cohort rate includes all students who began school as Freshman, so it is measured over four years, and includes all students who came and left, and thus is not necessarily a good indication of how well the district did.

ATTENDANCE. Mr. Hall indicated that there was software available from the Gates Foundation that would help identify kids at higher risk of dropping out. Mr. Knuschke indicated that the district had looked at various software packages that did this, but had not yet found one that they thought would be appropriate or effective for Walton.

Ms. Connolly asked if there was an attendance policy that dictated how many days of attendance a student could have.

The district used to have such a policy, but the state has made it clear that attendance cannot be used to calculate grades, so a student can literally not attend a class and still get credit for that class if they do all of the work and pass the exam. The only exceptions to this are science Regents exams which require a minimum number of labs to be completed before a student can take the Regents exam.

The district can do such things as meet with parents, file PINS petitions, and file Education Neglect petitions.

INFORMATION. Mr. Clough asked if enough information was getting out to the community, or whether perhaps there was too much information getting out, and it was overwhelming.

There was general agreement that the level of information was appropriate, and that there was more information available than there was before. The streaming of board meetings and events was particularly welcomed.

NEXT MEETING. Mr. Clough solicited topics for the next meeting. It was agreed that the committee would talk about Parent Involvement and any other topics that people might ask to be addressed. An e-mail with an exact date would be sent out and would solicit other topics.

SCHOOL BUDGET VOTE. The budget vote will be Tuesday, May 16th. If the new town assessments are out before the vote, the district will hold a discussion about assessments and tax levy rates before the vote to help explain to voters the changes in their assessment.

MEETING ADJOURNED. The meeting was adjourned at 5:20 p.m.